About LEVEL news

Contents

End of February Sees Exceptionally Warm Temperatures
Water Level Advisory
Lakes Superior and Ontario Regulation
Future Meetings
February Precipitation
February Outflows
Water Levels for the Great Lakes and Montreal Harbour
... *a monthly bulletin from Canadian Hydrographic Service*
About the monthly Water Level bulletin

February Precipitation Over the Great Lakes

As a percentage of the long-term February average:

Great Lakes Basin	93%
Lake Erie (including Lake St. Clair)	75%
Lake Superior	68%
Lakes Michigan-Huron	111%
Lake Ontario	90%

Note: These figures are preliminary.

LEVEL news

Volume 8, Number 3 **March 8, 2000**

Warm Weather Leads to Early Snow Melt

End of February Sees Exceptionally Warm Temperatures

Exceptionally warm weather over the last few days of February brought precipitation in the form of rain and led to an early snow melt over much of the Great Lakes - St. Lawrence River basin. While the levels on all lakes, except Lake Superior, rose slightly in response to these factors, only Lake Ontario appears to be experiencing a sustained rising trend. Unless this early loss of the basin's snow cover is followed by a exceptionally wet spring, water levels on all lakes will remain well below average this summer.

Lake Superior's level declined steadily throughout February ending the month 6 cm lower than it was at the start. The lake began March at about the same level as last year, 21 cm below its long-term average and 14 cm below Chart Datum for the lake.

Levels on Lakes Michigan-Huron fell a couple of centimetres during the mid part of February, then recovered at month's end due to basin precipitation and runoff. As a result, the lakes' beginning of March level was virtually the same as that recorded at the beginning of February. The lakes remain about 45 cm below average, 38 cm below last year's level, 12 cm below Chart Datum and just 30 cm above the record low levels recorded in 1964.

The warm weather also helped ease ice conditions on the St. Clair River allowing inflows from Lake Huron to Lake St. Clair to increase. As a result, Lake St. Clair levels recovered from the small, but sharp, drop that occurred in late January and persisted throughout the first three weeks of February. At the beginning of March, Lake St. Clair remains about 15 cm below average, down 34 cm from last year's level at this time.

Similar to Lakes Michigan-Huron, the levels of Lakes Erie and Ontario also fell a few centimetres over the first three weeks of February only to recover during the last week of the month. Of these lakes, only Lake Ontario appears to be experiencing a sustained rising trend. At the beginning of March, Lake Erie's level was virtually the same as that recorded a month earlier. Lake Erie remains about 23 cm below average, 35 cm below last year's level. Lake Ontario was about 11 cm below average, 6 cm higher than at this time last year.

While water levels in the St. Lawrence River rose somewhat in late February and early March as a result of the snow melt along the St. Lawrence valley,

February Outflows From the Great Lakes

As a percentage of the long-term February average:

Lake Superior 92%

Lake Erie 89%

Lake Huron 96%

Lake Ontario 91%

Note: These figures are preliminary.

Last Issue

Next Issue

Issue Index

Summary information for "LEVEL*news*"

they will decline once runoff conditions diminish. Levels on Lake St. Louis and at Montréal harbour are expected to rise temporarily once snow melts on the Ottawa River basin; however, they are expected to remain below average thereafter. Lake St. Lawrence, on the other hand, should see above average summer water level conditions due to the low flows through the hydropower dam at Cornwall/Massena.

Water Level Advisory

Water levels on Lake Superior and Lakes Michigan-Huron are presently below Chart Datum. Water levels on Lake St. Clair, Lake Erie and on the St. Lawrence River at Montréal are presently above Chart Datum, but considerably below their all-time average for this time of year. The level of Lake Ontario at present is slightly below its all-time average for this time of year. Mariners should exercise extreme caution throughout the entire system, especially on Lake Superior and Lakes Michigan-Huron where water levels are below Chart Datum and may remain so for the next several months.

Lakes Superior and Ontario Regulation

Lake Superior outflows for the next few months are expected to remain below average and as specified by the lake's regulation plan.

The International St. Lawrence River Board of Control continues to maintain low Lake Ontario outflows. In order to conserve water on Lake Ontario, this Board has authorized that outflows from the lake be less than specified by its regulation plan during the spring if dry conditions on Lake Ontario continue.

Future Meetings

The International Lake Superior Board of Control has tentatively scheduled its annual public meeting for the evening of Tuesday, June 27, 2000 in Marquette, MI.

The International Niagara Board of Control has scheduled its annual meeting with the public for the evening of Tuesday, September 12, 2000 in Niagara Falls, NY.

The International St. Lawrence River Board of Control has tentatively scheduled its annual public meeting for Tuesday, May 30, 2000 in Olcott, NY.

Please watch for detailed announcements for these meetings in future editions of LEVELnews.

Top of Page
Français | Contact Us | Help | Search | Canada Site
What's New | Topics | Publications | Weather | Home | About Us

part of Environment Canada's Green Lane™

Webmaster
Last Updated: 2000-12-29
Last Reviewed: 2000-12-29

Important Notices and Disclaimers
URL: http://www.on.ec.gc.ca/water/level-news/ln2000mar-e.html